

carry into practical effect a plan of systematic giving to the Home Mission work of the state. Appoint your agent, or agents, at once, and see how much each member of the church will pay each quarter in the year, and then persistently gather it in each quarter and send it to the treasurer of the Board. We still think it not too much to expect forty cents per member for the year from the entire brotherhood in Indiana. We trust you will help us realize this.

W. C. PERRY, Sec'y.

#### WASHINGTON, D. C.

Brother Henry Wise came to us Nov. 20. He expects to remain with us a few days. We are holding meeting every evening now in our "own hired house." We feel much encouraged of late. Held an election for deacon and deaconess yesterday evening. Will report in full later. Pray for us.

WM. LYON.

## Our Bible School

### STUDIES IN JOEL

#### Number 3

#### EXPLANATION OF THE TEXT

#### Chapter I

Verse 1. Compare this title with that of Hosea, Jonah, Micah and Zephaniah.

V. 2. An appeal is made to the "old men" because of their influence and because their memory goes farther back. They nor their fathers knew of such a time.

V. 4. The four names of devastating locusts are uncertain. They are probably so many stages of these insects.

V. 6. Here the locusts are represented as a hostile nation.

Vs. 7-13. The plague lasted, at least two years, (see 2:25) and in these verses the awful destruction is pictured. The grief is all the greater because the worship of Jehovah is cut off. The "meal offering," fine meal, and "drink-offering," wine, used in sacrifices fail. Read Lev. 2 and Num. 15:5, 7, 10.

V. 14. A call to repentance. The heads of the nation are to assemble at the call of the priests, and both priests and people are to cry unto Jehovah.

V. 15. "The day of the Lord." This phrase is a keynote to the prophecy. It means, in general, a day of reckoning which the Lord will hold. These great natural calamities portend the swiftly coming Divine judgment.

Vs. 16-20. A repetition of their great distress. A ruinous drouth adds to the destruction. Note the vividness of this section. Nature, animals, man—all suffer.

#### Chapter II

Vs. 1-2a. The prophet cries in a warning voice to all. He sees a day more terrible approaching. The description is primarily that of an on-coming locust plague—but such will be the day of the Lord.

Vs. 2b-10. A most graphic description of the terror that a locust plague strikes into

the heart of man. It is under the figure of an army of men under command of the Lord that the prophet speaks.

V. 11. The prophet sees in all this the Lord's doing.

Vs. 12-17. Here is the bold statement that the people have sinned and turned away from God. The call now comes to turn and repent with all their heart.

Vs. 18-27. These verses are a beautiful promise of the Lord. They are spoken as if already fulfilled. To be sure the fulfillment is conditioned upon the response of the people to repent.

V. 28. *Afterward.* After this great period of enjoying natural gifts. *Pour out,* like the rain (v. 23.) *Spirit.* Here means the Spirit such as characterizes prophets, the Holy Spirit. And this was to come upon all flesh, that is, a universal bestowal upon men. Compare the afflictions of Peter in Acts 2:16-21. Also Num. 11:29.

V. 30. This token of great grace is to be followed by wondrous signs which shall again presage "the coming of the day of the Lord."

#### Chapter III

Vs. 1-16a. On these verses little more need be said than that the destruction of the heathen is portrayed. These nations have spoiled Judah and now suffer just retribution. *Jehoshaphat* means "the Lord will judge."

Vs. 16b-21. These verses depict the glorious restoration of Judah and Jerusalem.

#### THE WEEK'S WORK

1. Read the book with these brief notes before you.
2. Bring together all the passages referring to the religious and moral condition of the people.
3. Collect all references to "the day of the Lord."
4. Study the imagery of the book.

J. ALLEN MILLER.

Hiram, O.

#### PRAYER MEETING TOPICS

J. L. GILLIN

#### CHARACTER STUDIES—JACOB. NO. 3

#### Life Lessons

a Note the craftiness which his sons inherited. Gen. 37:29-34. (1) Heredity did tell then. Does it now? Luke 11:48.

b There are some times in all men's lives, when they feel the inadequacy of craftiness, or their own skill and power, and feel their dependence upon self, and of their former course of life. These are the night wrestles of humanity. I Sam. 12:13; Isa. 38:1-6; Mark 14:72; Acts 9:8, 9.

c Craftiness and deceit always lead to trouble and punishment. Isa. 30:1; Prov. 26:18, 19.

d The sharp bargains of selfishness never make us friends, nor ever win souls to our God. Luke 6:18; Matt. 5:16.

e It pays to raise children religiously. Prov. 22:6. (1) Children will be just about what their parents make or allow them to be made. The Sunday-school and King's Children and church cannot take the

place of home training, which is first and best. How are you training your children in the home?

f Jacob did transmit one great thing to his sons, his own faith in God, and belief in his own mission to the world. Heb. 11:21; Gen. 48:10-22.

g God honors the last days of a man of faith. Gen. 45:25-28; Gen. 47:9, 11, 12.

h Is it a sign of God's displeasure, when he punishes us for our sins, whether of ignorance or wilfulness?

i It pays to live a Christian life. It pays to live the Christian life right.

#### SERMONS IN QUAIN TEXTS

Text:—Went and told Jesus. Matthew 14:15.

That is what the disciples did after they had reverently buried the headless body of their noble chief, John the Baptist. He had been a good friend, had led them from the error of their way, and finally pointed them to the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. They loved him, and after his death there was but one thing for them to do, and that was to take the matter to the Lord, so they came and told Jesus. It is a blessed thing to have one like Jesus to come to in every hour of trouble. He invites us to come. All who are weary and heavy laden, sick of heart and soul, burdened with the trials of life and its daily drudgery, are bidden to come to him. When we are overwhelmed with sorrow and our grief too deep for utterance, we may come to Jesus and he will heal all our wounds. When we are the victims of cruelty and persecution, Jesus bids us come to him for comfort and help. We should take to him, not only our sorrows and griefs and losses and troubles, but our joys also. When the day's work is done, take it all to Jesus. He will sympathize with you in all the trials and difficulties of life, and share with you in all your joys. Do not be afraid to come to him. He understands all the mysteries of life, he is able to unravel its difficulties for you and make life easier. It is a blessed thought, this thought of coming to Jesus with all that we have and are and do. "Cast your cares upon him for he careth for you."

Text:—"Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit." Matthew 7:17.

Ripe fruit has its own peculiar beauty. As the fruit ripens, the sun tints it with surpassing loveliness and the colors deepen till the beauty of the fruit is equal to the beauty of the blossom, and in some respects is superior. What a delicacy of bloom there is upon the grape, the peach, the plum, when they have attained perfection. It is another sort of beauty altogether from that of the blossom, yielding to the eye of the husbandman who has the care of the garden a fairer sight by far. The blossom is painted by the pencil of hope, but the fruit is dyed in the hue of enjoyment. There is in ripe Christians the beauty of realized sanctification, which the word of God knows by the name of "the beauty of holiness." This consecration to